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Bart Walker
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Murfreesboro, TN 37129

February 5, 1999

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street
Washington, D.C. 20554

RM-9419

Dear Ms. Salas:

Enclosed is an "original" and ten copies of my
"comments" relating to micro-broadcasting.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bart Walker

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COMM. 10018

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)
)
Amendment of Sections 74.1231)
74.1232, 74.1233, 74.1284 of the)
Commission's rules)

RM-9419

Comments

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 has made it more difficult for minorities and small businesspersons to get into the FM broadcasting business. The elimination of "comparative hearings" and a switch to "auctions" when more than one person applies for a frequency, appears to award broadcast licenses to "who has the money to outbid their competition" instead of "who can best serve the city of license". The public is not benefiting from "diversity of owners

In the decades prior to the 1996 Act, the number of radio stations someone could own was limited (diversity of ownership). Broadcasters were often small business entrepreneurs (mom and pop operators), churches, etc. These owners usually live in the community where the radio station was located and they programmed information needed by that geographic area.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 has created mega-station corporations. One firm now owns almost 1,000 radio stations. That means one company controls approximately 10 per cent of all radio stations in the US. As a result of these massive purchases, the number of stations owned by minorities has dropped even more. **This proposal would create "diversity of ownership" and "would not cause technical problems to full-power FM licensees".**

I understand why full-power FM broadcasters fear that "massive interference" would result from thousands of new micro-radio stations. ***Note: Citizens Band Radio offers licenses to the public. Reflect back to how quickly non-licensed operators took over the 11-meter band. It is no secret that many CB operators run more than the legal power. There is a strong likelihood that micro-radio will bring a CB'ing of the FM band.*** The comments outlined herein offer a solution to that possible problem.

Current **FM translator** regulations protect "full power" broadcasters. **FM translators** have no "negative impact" on future digital broadcasts either.

In these "comments", I propose that the Commission:

- (1) Change the name "FM translator" to "Class D" FM and allow program origination by these licensees. Make all present and future "FM translators" this new class of station. Give licensees the "option" to originate programming, rebroadcast an FM station, rebroadcast an AM stand-alone station or do any combination of these possibilities. AM stand-alone licensees would not be eligible for these "Class D" FM stations if they or any immediate member of their family "owns a full-power FM radio station that puts a 1 mv/m signal over the Class D transmitter site."
- (2) Do not change any of the current FCC regulations that protect "signals" of all other classes of FM stations.
- (3) Give "primary status" to this new "Class D" FM service, so that the investment made by minorities and small business entrepreneurs has some protection.

This plan would allow minorities, religious groups, small business entrepreneurs and current AM stand-alone licensees (who meet the requirements) to have a "low power FM radio station". It would also give "full-power licensees" the "signal protection" needed to insure that their investment is not damaged.

The frequency, power, antenna height of these "Class D" FM stations would be governed by current "FM translator" regulations. Since regulations that are already in effect now would be used, controversy and concern with interference to "full-power broadcasters" and to future "digital broadcasts" would be eliminated.

This plan would also allow the Commission to "test the waters" and determine if the operators of this new class of station would adhere to FCC regulations. It would reduce the possibility of CB'ing the FM band, benefit the public and offer diversity of media ownership.

Respectfully Submitted,



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